

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1502

January 29, 2010

COMMITTEES:
AGRICULTURE
APPROPRIATIONS
HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS
SMALL BUSINESS

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Major winter storms from December 23 to December 27, 2009 and on January 19 to January 26, 2010 have caused severe damages to public property and infrastructure in much of central and western Iowa. The severe weather adversely impacted public safety, transportation and commerce. With nearly three feet of snow falling in the area within the past month, and temperatures dropping to nearly 20 below zero on numerous occasions during the past few weeks, many towns are dealing with road washouts, downed trees that restrict emergency access, and power outages. Tens of thousands of Iowans went without power for days.

This storm brought additional ice accumulation and stalled the cleanup progress of damage caused by blizzards that inundated the area at the end of December. State and municipal roads have been blocked by debris and snow from these extreme weather events. Snow budgets have been stressed and rural citizens are finding themselves in dangerous situations.

The hardest hit counties received an emergency proclamation from Governor Chet Culver, authorizing state resources to be deployed to local communities affected by the ice storms. Significant manpower and equipment available at the state, county, and local level have been dedicated to responding to and recovering from this disaster.

Governor Culver has determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the state and affected local governments, and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary to save lives, to protect property, public health and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a disaster.

I strongly support Governor Culver's request for a Presidential Disaster declaration for the following counties in Iowa affected by this storm:

Adair
Calhoun
Cherokee
Fremont

Audubon
Carroll
Emmet
Guthrie

Buena Vista
Cass
Franklin
Harrison

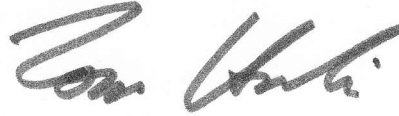
Ida
Monona
Palo Alto
Sac
Sioux
Madison

Lyon
Osceola
Pocahontas
Sac
Woodbury

Mills
Page
Pottawattamie
Shelby
Crawford

These counties require federal assistance due to the lack of resources at the local level. I urge you and your staff to work closely with state and local officials to ensure that federal assistance is made available to all those in need. Thank you very much for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Tom Harkin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tom" being more prominent than the last name "Harkin".

Tom Harkin
United States Senator

TH/tvm